Manager in their respective cadres. This was done in order to create a near harmony in the levels between the non-technical ground staff of erstwhile Air India and erstwhile Indian Airlines as against the demand of Union for total parity in career progression pattern since 1996 before merger was effected. While implementing this, such of the Senior Superintendents who were to be appointed directly to the post of Assistant Manager would have superseded the existing officers and to prevent these employees who were existing in the grade of Officers were first promoted to the post of Assistant Manager since majority of them in any case had rendered more than 6 years' service as Senior Superintendents.

Condition attached with contract for metro-airports

†333. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the private companies which have been given contract for construction of airport in metros, have put a condition that no other airport would be set up near those metros and if it is so, the contract would be given to that company only;

(b) if so, whether Government has accepted the said condition; and

(c) if so, the justification to accept these conditions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) In the Concession Agreements entered into by the Government with the private companies for the development of greenfield airports at Bangalore and Hyderabad, it is mentioned that within a radius of 150 km from these airports, no new airports, no new airports would be allowed to be set up and existing airports would not be upgraded, barring a few exceptions.

In case of AAI airports at Delhi and Mumbai that are leased out to Joint Venture Companies (JVCs) for expansion and modernisation, the Government has entered into State Support Agreements (SSAs) with the JVCs. According to these SSAs, the JVCs have the Right of First Refusal (ROFR) with regard to a second airport within 150 km. radius of these airports.

The restriction of 150 km. and provision of ROFR have been prescribed with a view to ensure financial viability of these airport projects.

Airfare anomaly

334. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the fares for the same sectors are different in Government owned airlines and private airlines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has any control in fixing the fares for these airlines;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the corrective measures being taken by Government to rationalize the fare structure for all the airlines in the country?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (e) Air fares are not being regulated by the Government. Airlines are free to charge air fares as per the market forces. They however, have to comply with the route dispersal guidelines prescribed by the Government.

Problem due to heavy passenger flow at airports

335. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all the major airports in the country have become crowded, congested and unhealthy and there is dearth of basic facilities there;

(b) whether there is any crash plan of action to tide over this problem which has arisen due to heavy flow of passengers; and

(c) how long the crisis management will take to manage the critical situations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) The unprecedented growth in civil aviation sector has thrown up challenges for airport infrastructure, specially at busy airports like Delhi and Mumbai airports. The infrastructure upgradation at airports is a continuous process. Delhi and Mumbai airports are restructured and being expanded and modernized through public private participation (PPP). New greenfield airports have been recently commissioned at Hyderabad and Bangalore. AAI has already undertaken upgradation of 35 Non Metro Airports in a time bound manner. In addition, 13 additional Non Metro Airports are also being developed. These airports are being upgraded in a time bound manner.

Expansion of Chennai airport

336. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for delay in expansion at Chennai International Airport while many of the major Metro City International Airports in India have seen or are having airport expansion;

(b) the various major areas of expansion at Chennai; and

(c) whether there would be an all out effort for quick execution of the Project within a time-frame at every stage of expansion after having delayed the Project quite long?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Government has, in August, 2008, approved the modernisation/expansion of Chennai airport by Airports Authority of India (AAI) at an estimated cost of Rs. 1808 crores from its own resources. The work of the project has been awarded in September, 2008.

The salient features of the project are: extension and upgradation of the secondary runway, construction of a new domestic terminal, extension of existing international terminal, construction of parallel taxiway, augmentation of apron capacity, additional parking bays etc.

The project is expected to be completed in about 26 months.